I/We claim:

[c1] 1. A method for transmitting packet types of packets, the method comprising:

receiving a packet having symbols;

identifying a packet type of the packet;

transmitting a synchronization symbol that corresponds to the identified packet type, wherein the transmitted synchronization symbol provides synchronization information and wherein each packet type has a different synchronization symbol; and

transmitting the symbols of the received packet.

- [c2] 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the symbols of the packet include inband symbols and the synchronization symbols are out-of-band symbols.
- [c3] 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the in-band symbols are transition optimized and the out-of-band synchronization symbols are not transition optimized.
- [c4] 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the synchronization symbol is transmitted before transmitting the symbols of the packet.
- [c5] 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the packet has a header with a field that indicates packet type and the identifying of the packet type includes checking the field of the header that indicates packet type.
- [c6] 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the packet types include a data packet.

10/25/01

- [c7] 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the packet types include a control packet.
- [c8] 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the symbols are transmitted to a switch network.
- [c9] 9. A method for identifying packet types of packets of symbols, the method comprising:

receiving a synchronization symbol indicating a packet type, each packet type having a different synchronization symbol;

receiving a packet of symbols; and

indicating that the received packet of symbols has the packet type of the received synchronization symbol.

- [c10] 10. The method of claim 9 wherein the symbols of the packets include in-band symbols and the synchronization symbols are out-of-band symbols.
- [c11] 11. The method of claim 10 wherein the in-band symbols are transition optimized and the out-of-band synchronization symbols are not transition optimized.
- [c12] 12. The method of claim 9 wherein the synchronization symbol is received before the symbols of the packet are received.
- [c13] 13. The method of claim 9 wherein the packet types include a data packet.
- [c14] 14. The method of claim 9 wherein the packet types include a control packet.

- [c15] 15. The method of claim 9 wherein the symbols are received from a switch.
- [c16] 16. A communications device for transmitting packet types of packets, comprising:
 - an identification component that identifies a packet type of a packet of symbols; and
 - a transmission component that transmits a synchronization symbol that corresponds to the identified packet type, the transmitted synchronization symbol providing synchronization information and each packet type having a different synchronization symbol, and that transmits the symbols of the packet.
- [c17] 17. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the symbols of the packet include in-band symbols and the synchronization symbols are out-of-band symbols.
- [c18] 18. The communications device of claim 17 wherein the in-band symbols are transition optimized and the out-of-band synchronization symbols are not transition optimized.
- [c19] 19. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the synchronization symbol is transmitted before transmitting the symbols of the packet.
- [c20] 20. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the packet has a header with a field that indicates packet type and the identification component checks the field of the header that indicates packet type.
- [c21] 21. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the packet types include a data packet.

[37179-8018 app.doc] -66- 10/25/01

- [c22] 22. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the packet types include a control packet.
- [c23] 23. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the symbols are transmitted to a switch network.
- [c24] 24. The communications device of claim 16 wherein the communications device is part of a storage area network.